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OXC-0894
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22 September 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Conversations with Dr. Hugh L. Dryden, Deputy Administrator,
NASA, on 21 September 1960

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1. I arranged to see Dr. Dryden in his office in order to insure that NASA at Edwards Air Force Base took no further action toward implementing their long standing interest [redacted] the X-15 flights between Wendover Air Force Base and Edwards Air Force Base. Colonel Geary last week succeeded in calling off the Air Force portion of the interest of which I speak, but at the same time it was he who suggested that a visit to Dr. Dryden might be in order on the NASA portion of the problem.

2. Dr. Dryden was not familiar with any change in what he had understood to be the dropping of interest [redacted] for the X-15, and he said he would call Edwards and speak to Mr. Paul Bickle there to make sure that no further action was taken. We left this subject with an understanding that if I did not hear from Dr. Dryden, I could assume that the matter had been properly solved.

3. I expressed appreciation on behalf of the Agency and Kelly Johnson for NASA's cooperation arranged by Dr. Dryden in the use of the high speed tunnel at Ames Laboratories for flight simulation tests on OXCART. I also inquired if Dr. Dryden was aware of any significant information on the question of sonic boom tests which might have escaped notice by the Air Force, which body had been negotiating with NASA recently on this subject. He said that he was not and felt that the information made available to General Estes was complete. He did make reference to recent tests conducted [redacted] wherein supersonic aircraft flew measured courses at extremely low level against instrumentation furnished by NASA and against tethered animals in order to provide the Air Force with information on the biology of blast. I told

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him that General Flickinger had mentioned these tests to me, but I had never seen any of the results. He said that the Air Force had residual interest in determining the extent to which sonic boom at low level could be employed tactically against ground troops. I told him that I felt that we could obtain these test results through General Flickinger with very little difficulty.

4. Dr. Dryden then discoursed briefly upon a recent visit from Mr. Bissell when the subject of additional support which possibly might be derived from new TIROS satellites furnishing cloud photography in advance of CORONA firings as a means of insuring greater operational reliability on the latter vehicle. He inquired into the circumstances surrounding the unfortunate disappearance of the last capsule, stating that he had been out of the country in Switzerland at the time and had not therefore been able to follow the matter too closely in the press. He asked if the quality of the end product was a matter of joy or disappointment to the intelligence community. I told him that in my humble opinion, the results were extremely gratifying, leading us to the belief that an effective operational linkage might some day be made between low or medium resolution satellite photography and the more precise photography possible from high resolution carried in supersonic aircraft. Dr. Dryden stated that he understood that BMD was preparing a major briefing for NASA and presumably other high officials interested in the space program and that Dr. Glennen had talked about the possibility of obtaining the President's airplane to fly a party from Washington to the Coast to attend the meeting. He said that he did not believe this briefing would deal with the CORONA aspects of DISCOVERER, but rather with launch, orbit, recovery, and telemetry aspects. I told him I was not aware of this briefing, but would like to look into it.

5. Dr. Dryden then mentioned the Second International Congress in the Aeronautical Sciences recently held in Zurich. A Dr. Walter Georgii of the Deutsche Forschungsanstalt fur Segelflug in Munich had delivered an interesting paper on physics of the jet stream. In conversations with Dr. Dryden and Dr. Theodor van Karmann following this paper, Georgii had expressed keen interest in obtaining the use of an United States Air Force aircraft to conduct with his own instrumentation research in jet stream phenomena between West Germany and North Africa. Apparently without being prompted, Dr. van Karmann suggested that NASA might be willing to make a U-2 available for this purpose. No decision was taken on this matter, but Dr. Dryden asked if we might have a cover interest in looking into this matter further. I told him that if the first requirement was that this type of flying had to be done in the areas Dr. Georgii mentioned, I had grave doubts that we could accomplish this. On the other hand, if the

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results could be obtained from flights within the United States, we might well be interested. I then gave him a thumb nail sketch of the proposal I have discussed with General Flickinger for a United States based U-2 detachment working under the sponsorship of the Space Science Board of the National Academy of Sciences. SSB has a program of valid scientific objectives that are well within the grasp of the U-2, but I indicated that in view of the fact that Flickinger had recently advised me that SSB had been gobbled up on this particular program by NASA, I had some doubts as to whether Dr. Glennen would sit still for even a partial NASA involvement in anything having to do with the U-2. Without answering me directly, he indicated that Dr. Glennen was still actively sensitized to the subject of the U-2. On this pleasant note our conversation ended.

SIGNED

JAMES A. CUNNINGHAM, JR.
Assistant Chief
DD/P-IPD

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